



## VERNON VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION INC

P.O. BOX 951  
VERNON, CONNECTICUT 06066

### *ASSOCIATION MEETING MINUTES*

September 30, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by President, Robert Turkington. Motion was made/seconded (Fischer/Morse) to accept the minutes from the July 29, 2013 Association Meeting.

#### *Treasurer's Report:*

- Dave Galley reported the 3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr Treasurers Report.
- Expenses for the quarter were \$2,790; income was \$526. Final balance is \$14,971.
- The Toys for Tikes Ameriprise account balance is \$25,553; the checkbook balance was \$1,866.
- Dave Goric informed that a check from Hartford Toner should be coming in.

Motion was made/seconded (Fischer/Boulette) to accept the Treasurer's Report as submitted.

#### *Communications & Bills:*

- Thank you card was received from Dottie Konarski for the fruit basket sent.

#### *Good & Welfare:*

- Little activity was reported. A new supply of flags is needed. Dick Bowman will investigate.

#### *Toys for Tikes:*

- Toys will be purchased from Toys R Us in early November. We will need to pick up @ the Manchester Store during the first week of December. A truck and help will be needed.
- Solicitation letters to local businesses will go out in mid October.

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- Toy set up/sorting will be completed on Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup> and delivery will be done on Monday, December 16<sup>th</sup>. Assistance on Sunday beginning @ 9:00, Station 441, is greatly appreciated.
- We are receiving an additional load of books (500+) from the Vernon Historical Society the first week of December. Date/time TBD. Assistance will be needed to help transfer the books to Station 441. Boxes are also needed for this activity. Contact Diane or Ron for details. More info will be provided later.

***Christmas Party:***

- The 2013 party is being hosted by Station 141. It will be held at the Lake View Restaurant in South Coventry on Saturday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. Ticket price is being finalized but should not exceed \$37 p/person and should be available within a couple of weeks. Chief Call will communicate stand-by duty.

***Annual Banquet:***

- The 2014 Annual Banquet will be hosted by R-441. It will be held on March 1<sup>st</sup> at A Villa Louisa in Bolton from 5:00 – 11:00.

***Softball Team:***

- The team continues to have games on Sunday afternoons through October 20<sup>th</sup> at the Community Field behind Center 375. The remaining schedule is:  
10/6 @ 5:20 & 6:30, 10-13 @ 6:30, 10/20 @ 6:30

***Department Picnic:***

- Stan Landry reported that expenses for the picnic came in slightly over budget for expense of the inflatable bounce house. Reimbursement was requested & approved by the BOD. A good time was had by all. Approximately 100 people attended which is up from last year. Planning for the 2014 will begin earlier next year with hope that more people will be able to attend.

***Comedy Show:***

- Stan Landry and Dave Galley have been researching the event. Stan reported that the performers from "Laughter Saves Lives" would cost \$2,000 + 10% of ticket sales. Dave also has a contact and is investigating. Venues to hold the event included Georgina's and Maneeleys; however, both were extremely expensive. Maple Grove holds 265 people and will charge \$350/hall + \$100 for bartender. Dave is contacting the TKB club as well. An end of March/early April timeframe is in scope.

***Old Business:***

- Edgar Jackson reported his findings regarding a Carnival activity hosted by the Association. He estimated a 3 week time commitment would be needed by all members; however, the proceeds would be large. It was discussed that a meeting be scheduled between us and the carnival vendor to prepare a presentation for the members. Edgar will coordinate.

***New Business:***

- Bob has recently reviewed the current By-Laws of the VVFA. He reported a change is needed to reflect name change of Toys for Tikes in lieu of Tots.
- Also brought forward for discussion the topic of Annual Dues for Association members to assist with keeping the Association solvent on an ongoing basis. As the discussion progressed an informal show of hands reflected a majority agree with the concept. The change would need to be communicated to the members at the December 30<sup>th</sup> meeting and posted. The vote will occur at the Annual Association Meeting in March, 2014. His letter of proposal is attached to the minutes for review. Dave Galley will prepare a 5 year record of income and expenses for the December meeting.

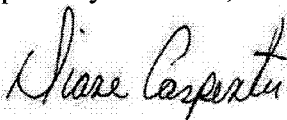
***Upcoming Events:***

- Engine 441 will be hosting a Mohegan Sun bus trip on November 9<sup>th</sup>. Tickets are \$20 per person.
- There will be a Breast Cancer Awareness event @ Chili's in Manchester on Wednesday, October 2nd from 5-9:00.
- Station 141 Christmas tree sales will be held 11/29 – 12/22.
- The Junior Company is conducting a fundraiser for purchase of fun pasta. See Sandy Manseau, Mike Colt, Linda Lukas or any Junior member if you can support this project. Orders are due by 10/14/13.

***Good of the Order:***

Motion was made/seconded (Fischer/Bowman) to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane Carpenter, Secretary

October 2, 2013

To The Members of the Town of Vernon Volunteer Firefighters Association

As you may have heard and have seen in the minutes of our September meeting, I brought up for discussion 2 important issues that the Members will be addressing in the next 6 months.

The first involves a change to our by-laws; one of the major projects of the Association has been the financial oversight of the Toys for Tots children's toy delivery. We were contacted by the Marine Corp League informing they have the copyright on the name and use it nationally. For nearly 50 years we were under the impression that we had started first so we were ok to use the name. The Marine Toys for Tots program in fact predated ours by 2 years prompting us to change to Toys for Tikes. However; our by-laws (written in the 1990's) still reference Toys for Tots several times. In order to clean up the language and prevent any confusion in the future; an amendment to the bylaws will be introduced, changing the word "Tots" to "Tikes". The change will be presented at the December meeting, posted in the stations and voted at the first Quarterly meeting of 2014. A 2/3's vote of the members in attendance at the meeting is required for passage.

The second issue will require a little more conversation. Since the change in the policy of the State of CT, regarding distribution of funds to fire departments for Highway responses, we have been without a source of income. We have managed to continue to do the work of the Association through the generosity of our community. A donation of a car and 2 mail campaigns soliciting donations from our neighbors have met our budgetary needs; however the last mail campaign brought in substantially less than the first. The second campaign was also done without any cost to the Association by the fund raising company as part of it's commitment to community service. If we had to pay for the mailing, as we did with the first, the net amount of money raised would have just covered 1 year's expenses. Other fund raising options are in the works, the upcoming "Comedy Night" is one example. A sold out show will net about half of this year's budget. We need to explore other options that will provide a steady source of income that can be augmented by fundraisers and donations.

The conversation I introduced was DUES.

The By-laws of the Association provide for setting the dues rate each year at the annual meeting, which occurs on the same night as the first quarterly meeting of the calendar year. The issue has not been raised each year, until now, because we have been able to make ends meet with other sources; that has changed.

Each year the Association spends approximately \$5,000.00 to directly benefit us, the members. These dollars go toward the holiday party, banquet, family picnic, golf tournament, softball team, good and welfare and parade expenses. Our second biggest expense is the Insurance Policy that provides liability coverage. It is required under our "Articles of Incorporation" and to meet Ct State Statue. The remainder of our expenses, fall under charitable and community contributions to children's athletic teams, holiday food baskets and other outreach activities that directly affect our community.

I bring up this issue now, so we have time to discuss our options, explore ideas and make sure that everyone is informed and has a voice in the conversation.

The initial proposal, (just as a starting point for discussion) is the following

*Each member of the Town of Vernon Volunteer Firefighters Association, who receives a stipend from The Town of Vernon Volunteer Fire Department, shall transfer to the Association from each quarterly check the amount of \$ 7.00 dollars. Those members of the department over the 150 cap will be given full privileges of membership without paying dues, until such time as they begin receiving a stipend.*

*Special members and members receiving LOSAP payments only, will also be exempt from dues.*

If Dues were set at \$ 10.00 per quarter (check) we would cover two thirds of our current budget  
\$ 15.00 per quarter would cover the budget in total.

I know the idea of paying another bill is something we would all rather avoid and we already give our time, talents and money to provide emergency services to our community; the Association is an extension of that commitment, providing for the children of Vernon and looking after ourselves and our families.

Thank you for listening. I hope we can take the time over the next few months to explore ideas, share opinions and come up with a solution that will allow your Association to continue serving your commitment to volunteerism.

Respectfully;  
Bob Turkington